BIMSTEC and ARF. Upon our approach along with that of other countries the United Nations Security Council designated the Pakistan based Jamaat-ud-Dawa as a terrorist organisation under its Resolution 1267. India has also established Joint Working Groups on counter-terrorism with twenty-five countries. India's cooperation with the international community on counter terrorism will be actively pursued.

Indian ships in Exclusive Economic Zone

444. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India was forced to move out its three ships engaged in Oil-Explorations from Block No. 22 of its Exclusive Economic Zone on protests by Bangladesh;

(b) if so, the details of Bangladesh protests, and the Indian claims on the EE Zone; and

(c) Government's reaction and response to the incidents?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) The demarcation of maritime boundary between India and Bangladesh is under discussion bilaterally. A round of Technical Level Talks on Maritime Boundary was also held at Dhaka from 15-17th September, 2008. India had lodged a protest for some of the oil blocks offered by Government of Bangladesh in their recent 3rd round of bidding as they were impinging on our maritime boundary. Bangladesh has, in turn, also lodged some claims with India on the maritime boundary issues. Both sides are negotiating to resolve the issue peacefully.

Maltreatment to Indians in Pakistan

445. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Mrs. Asha Patil W/o Late Khaled, who had gone to Pakistan to live with her husband has returned to India after her in-laws harassed, following the death of her husband has complained that the Indian High Commission did not help her out during the period of her turmoil;

(b) if so, details thereof;

(c) whether Mrs. Asha has also stated that there are other such Indian who are subject to maltreatment in Pakistan; and

(d) if so, whether Government has issued any instruction to Indian High Commission in Pakistan?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Government is in receipt of information that Smt. Asha Patil had expressed her dissatisfaction that the Indian High Commission in Pakistan did not respond to her plea for support during the hard times she faced in Pakistan after the death of her husband.

(b) The matter was enquired into and it was found that there was no basis to it.

(c) Government has not received any such information from Smt. Asha Patil.

(d) Does not arise.

Number of Haj Pilgrims

446. DR V. MAITREYAN : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of Haj Pilgrims going to Saudi Arabia every year from India;

(b) whether the passport requirement was not existing till now as per the agreement between both the countries;

(c) whether the Saudi authorities have requested for compulsory passport and visa requirement from the current year; and

(d) if so, whether Government is taking up the matter with the Saudi Authorities and what would be the stand of Government for future Haj Pilgrims to Saudi Arabia?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) The total number of pilgrims proceeded for Haj through the Haj Committee of India during the last five years is as under:

Haj 2005	—	80772
Haj 2006 I	—	99660
Haj 2006 II	—	108816
Haj 2007	—	110415
Haj 2008	—	122116

(b) Yes.

(c) Yes. The Saudi government has informed that all Haj pilgrims should travel on international passport from Haj 2009, on which visa will be endorsed.

(d) The Indian Mission in Saudi Arabia has already taken up the matter with Saudi authorities to defer the requirement of international Passport for Indian Haj pilgrims for one year more.

Issue of transit journey and transit business

447. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the issue of transit journey and transit business from the North- Eastern States to Kolkata through Bangladesh has been taken up with the new Government at Bangladesh very recently;

(b) if so, the results thereof;

(c) whether there has been any development in trades and commerce between India and Bangladesh after institution of Sheikh Hasina Government; and

(d) the commodities getting emphasis during discussion?